

22. (Amended) An apparatus of claim 1 [any of claims 15 to 21] in which the pulsation member comprises a pulsation chamber [(9)] disposed coaxially within the process chamber [(1)].

24. (Amended) A method according to claim 23 wherein the apparatus comprises a perforated sloping ramp [(19)] contained within a process chamber [(1)] for containing solvent for the fuel, and a pulsation member which in use creates pulses in solvent in the process chamber [(1)], the perforations being designed to direct pulses of solvent along and up the ramp, the method comprising loading solvent into the process chamber [(1)], loading fuel pin pieces onto a lower region of the ramp and creating solvent pulses to transport the fuel pin pieces up the ramp to a discharge point when the cladding hulls are discharged from the ramp.

REMARKS

Claims 1-25 are presented for examination and are included herewith as revised claims with the International Preliminary Examination Report. Claim 14 has been canceled. Various claims have been amended to better conform to U.S. practice. Applicants respectfully request substantive examination on the merits.

Respectfully submitted,

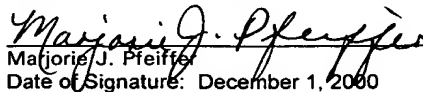


Robert J. Smith
Registration No. 40,820

Correspondence Address:
USPTO Customer No.: **20792**
Myers Bigel Sibley & Sajovec
Post Office Box 37428
Raleigh, NC 27627
Telephone (919) 854-1400
Facsimile (919) 854-1401

"Express Mail" mailing label number EL682671148US
Date of Deposit: December 1, 2000

I hereby certify that this paper or fee is being deposited with the United States Postal Service "Express Mail Post Office to Addressee" service under 37 CFR 1.10 on the date indicated above and is addressed to BOX PCT, Commissioner for Patents, Washington, DC 20231.



Marjorie J. Pfeiffer
Date of Signature: December 1, 2000